

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
Loudoun County at a Glance	1
Business Demographics at a Glance	2
<b>Step One: Initial Business Considerations</b>	<b>3</b>
Why Do You Want to Start a Business?	3
Examine Your Personal Characteristics and Preferences	3
Decide What You Need in a Business Location	4
Local Business Resources	6
<b>Step Two: Develop a Business Plan</b>	<b>9</b>
A Resource Tailored to Small Businesses	10
<b>Step Three: Determine Your Financing Source</b>	<b>13</b>
Private Investors (“Angels”)	14
Venture Capital Firms	15
Vendor/Supplier Financing	15
Government Agencies (Federal, State, Local)	15
Federal Programs	16
Virginia Programs	20
Loudoun County Programs	25
<b>Step Four: Choose Your Legal Structure</b>	<b>27</b>
Sole Proprietorship	27
General Partnership	27
Limited Partnership	28
Corporation	28
Limited Liability Corporation	29
<b>Step Five: Select a Location and Obtain Appropriate Permits</b>	<b>31</b>
Zoning	31
Special Exception Uses	32
Zoning Permits and Certificates of Occupancy (non-residential)	33

## **Step Six: Apply for Federal, State and Local Business**

### **Licenses 39**

Register Your Business Structure	39
Register Your Trade Name	40
Obtain a Loudoun County Business and Professional Occupational License	40
Obtain a Federal Employer ID Number (EIN) or Tax ID Number	42
Obtain a Virginia State Taxpayer ID Number	42
Contact Other State Agencies to Register for Other Applicable Licenses and Permits	43
Obtain a Small Business Tax Kit	45
Obtain Business Insurance	45

## **Step Seven: Hire Employees 47**

Employer Identification Number (EIN)	47
Employees and Independent Contractors	47
Employer Tax Withholding	48
Sole Proprietors and Partners	49
Corporation Owners	49
Unemployment Tax	50
Workers' Compensation Insurance	50
Immigration and Naturalization	51
Americans with Disabilities Act	52
Virginia Right-to-Work Law	52
Minimum Wage	52
Other State Labor Regulations	52

## **Quick Reference Guide 53**

Loudoun County Contacts	53
Town Government Contacts	57
Commonwealth of Virginia Contacts	58
Federal Contacts	63

### Disclaimer

The information contained in this guide was compiled from numerous sources by the Loudoun County Department of Economic Development. Every effort was made to ensure that the information is accurate and up to date.

While this guide offers a comprehensive compilation of tips and contacts, it is not intended to be a sole-source resource. Additional references are available at your local libraries and bookstores.

If you have any questions, want to report a discrepancy in the content, or have suggestions for making this guide more useful, please contact the Loudoun County Department of Economic Development at (703) 777-0426.

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5th Floor  
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(703) 777-0426  
1-800-Loudoun  
www.loudoun.gov

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## Introduction

We're glad you're considering Loudoun County as your business location. This publication is designed to make the process of establishing your business here easier. We hope you find it helpful and look forward to working with you in your endeavors.

This guide lays out the seven steps to starting a business in Loudoun County and is intended to serve as a general outline of requirements; it is not meant to substitute for regulations and requirements in federal, state and county codes. Also, you can expect that exceptions exist to the process described here. Please contact the federal and state agencies and county departments and offices that apply to your business for complete and current information for your particular circumstances.

## Loudoun County at a Glance

Located 25 miles west of Washington, D.C., in Northern Virginia, Loudoun County is one of the fastest growing jurisdictions in the region and the country. Those who live and work here enjoy a prosperous economy, a rich heritage and quality-of-life amenities found in few other places:

- The county is comprised of 517 square miles (330,000 acres), with seven incorporated towns, 11 villages and approximately two dozen planned communities;
- Loudoun County is part of the dynamic Washington, D.C. metropolitan region, the fourth largest metro area in the United States;
- The region's five million residents represent a tremendous market and provide a residential and employment base that is among the strongest in the nation in terms of purchasing power and technical skills;
- Loudoun County is located less than an hour from Washington, D.C. and Capitol Hill, giving business leaders quick access to the nation's policy makers and to unique federal government support opportunities;

## Of Interest

Loudoun County has seen unprecedented growth in recent years, both in people and in business presence. Between 1990 and 2000, our population grew by 97%, from 86,000 to 169,000. We are projected to grow another 77% by 2010, to 300,000.

## Of Interest

Loudoun County is home to more than 9,000 businesses, which represent a range of industries, professions and trades. Nearly 85% of these businesses have fewer than 25 employees.

- Washington Dulles International Airport's eastern Loudoun location makes it possible for travelers to reach virtually any destination in the world within one day. Loudoun businesses and residents can also take advantage of Leesburg Executive Airport, Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport or Baltimore-Washington International Airport, all of which are close by; and
- Loudoun is home to a number of tourist and leisure-related attractions and is close to hundreds more. In addition to those attractions in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, residents and visitors have quick and easy access to the Blue Ridge Mountains; the Chesapeake Bay; the Shenandoah Valley; Virginia, Maryland and Delaware beaches; ski resorts in Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia and Pennsylvania; and other popular metropolitan areas, such as Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York.

### Business Demographics at a Glance

Loudoun's more than 9,000 businesses represent a broad range of industries, professions and trades, including agriculture, tourism, telecommunications, information technologies, aerospace, biotechnology, and just about everything in between. The county's businesses range in size from one to several thousand employees. In fact, while the county is home to many large corporate campuses, nearly 85 percent of Loudoun's businesses have fewer than 25 employees.

Businesses choose Loudoun for a number of reasons: unique and plentiful business location options and amenities; business development and growth support; proximity to Washington Dulles International Airport, the D.C. metropolitan region and the world; a highly educated workforce; and quality-of-life assets that make it possible for employees to work where they live.

More than 300 businesses establish a presence in Loudoun County each year, and job growth has more than doubled since 1990. In addition, of the approximately 120,000 county residents in the workforce, about half work in Loudoun.

## Step One: Initial Business Considerations

Starting and owning your own business is a challenging endeavor, but growing your business and prospering are the ultimate rewards. Making the decision to start a business requires that you determine whether you have the skills, knowledge and commitment to operate it successfully. Many books and websites are available to help you examine whether you have what it takes or can develop the skills necessary to succeed.

Following are some of the questions you should ask yourself before making the decision to move forward:

### Why do you want to start a business?

Your answers to this question might be multi-faceted. You may want to be your own boss; have a flexible work schedule; expand your professional skills and knowledge; or increase your income, among other things. Examine your answers closely and think about what you may have to give up if you start your own business. For example, you likely will forego the security of a paycheck and be challenged by long-term uncertainty as it relates to income generated by your business. Is this a reasonable and feasible concession?

### Examine your personal characteristics and preferences.

#### Are you a “people person”?

Owning a successful business depends on your ability to lead and make decisions; plan and budget; sell yourself and your business; and interact well with people. Is this your personality and do you enjoy these types of activities?

#### Are you willing to make personal and financial sacrifices?

Owning your own business is not always glamorous. In fact, many employees enjoy better working conditions than business owners. As a business owner, are you prepared to work 12- to 16-hour days, seven days a week (including holidays) to do what it takes to grow your business? Are you prepared to lose your personal financial investment if your business fails? Are you prepared to give up secure income and change your lifestyle until your business “turns the corner” financially?



### Tips

Consider taking the “Starting Your Own Business Quiz” offered by the Virginia Department of Business Assistance at [www.dba.state.va.us](http://www.dba.state.va.us).

You’ll find the quiz under Small Business Development/Getting Started.

In addition, the Virginia Business Information Center (VBIC) website, [www.dba.state.va.us/virginia/center](http://www.dba.state.va.us/virginia/center), includes links to many valuable resources for businesses just getting started.



## Tips

The Washington Business Journal has a comprehensive web-based service for women business executives and entrepreneurs that provides networking opportunities, advice, news and information. Go to [www.washington.bizwomen.com](http://www.washington.bizwomen.com).

### **Do you have the skills you need?**

What is your background and training? In many cases, operating your own business requires skills that go beyond your immediate expertise. In addition to the required core skills inherent to your particular business venture, you need to have management, marketing and bookkeeping capabilities. Successful businesses offer their customers unique skills, products, or services that set them apart from their competition. Do you have what it takes to do that?

### **Decide what you need in a business location.**

You probably know what kind of business you want to start. As your next step in the planning process, you will need to assess what kind of business location would be most appropriate. As the saying goes, it's all about location, location, location; where you establish your business is as important as the goods or services you deliver.

Businesses have a wide range of site locations from which to choose in Loudoun County. From well planned business parks in the suburban east to rural acreage in the agriculturally rich west, to historic town settings in between and home-based offices county-wide, Loudoun has something for everyone.

### **Eastern Loudoun – The County's Primary Business Center**

Businesses located in eastern Loudoun are neighbors to some of the most innovative companies and enterprises in the world. Considered the pulse of corporate and high-tech enterprise and becoming a global biotechnology cluster, eastern Loudoun offers the site choices and amenities that characterize a successful suburban business setting:

- Approximately 10,000 acres zoned for office/industrial development, with small and large parcels available, both in fully infrastructured business parks and as stand-alone properties;
- Many speculative development projects, including office, flex and industrial buildings;
- Competitive land prices for build-to-suit projects, with parcels available in sizes ranging from one to 1,000 acres; and
- Highly competitive rental rates for existing office and industrial properties.

### Loudoun's Incorporated Towns

Loudoun's seven historic towns offer a broad range of zoning classifications, unique buildings that are perfect for redevelopment and preservation projects, and an established and flourishing tourism industry. These towns encourage business growth that will preserve the historic, architectural and natural qualities that make each one unique. From elegant bed-and-breakfasts to equestrian support and retail, and a variety of professional services and boutique shops, Loudoun's towns support a variety of businesses in quaint settings:

- **Hamilton**, tucked between Leesburg and Purcellville, caters to the “passive tourist” and offers opportunities for steady and compatible businesses;
- **Hillsboro**, Loudoun's smallest town, was built along what is now a major thoroughfare, providing opportunities for small businesses that cater to commuters;
- **Leesburg**, Loudoun's county seat, is the center of government and the county's historic commercial center;
- **Lovettsville**, Loudoun's northernmost town, encourages businesses to locate in the new “Town Center,” which will help serve the local economy while preserving the town's natural surroundings;
- **Middleburg**, a well-known tourist destination, is the capital of Virginia's “Hunt Country” and a premier location for unique specialty businesses;
- **Purcellville**, western Loudoun's center of commerce, offers industrial sites, retail space and new office buildings, making it ideal for businesses of all kinds; and
- **Round Hill**, Loudoun's “gateway to the Blue Ridge Mountains,” is the perfect business location for recreation outfitters and businesses that cater to hiking, fishing, equestrian and other outdoor activities.

### Of Interest

Many entrepreneurs like the unique location options offered by Loudoun's towns, villages and rural areas. The county's historic buildings, for example, complement and encourage creativity, energy and entrepreneurial spirit.

### Tips

If you are considering a business location in one of Loudoun's incorporated towns or in the rural countryside, different requirements, regulations and zoning ordinances apply. Contact information for towns and rural businesses is included in this guide.


**Tips**

Take advantage of the many local resources available to help get your business started in Loudoun County. These resources offer a wealth of information and guidance either free or for a nominal fee.

### **Western Loudoun – A Robust Rural Economy**

Loudoun County's history is marked by a thriving agricultural presence. The county's rural economy is built on much more than traditional farming, however. It is characterized by a wide variety of agricultural enterprises and is bolstered by the majority of Loudoun's tourist attractions, wineries, bed-and-breakfasts and country inns, small retail and service establishments, home-based businesses, and light industries.

Most of Loudoun's 200,000 rural acres lie in the western part of the county. Having this much open space situated within a major metropolitan area makes Loudoun unique and provides opportunities for businesses that can contribute to the county's rural economy, including: equestrian enterprises; vineyards and wineries; Christmas tree farms; fruit and vegetable producers; nurseries; niche farming enterprises; biotechnology activities; and cattle farms, among others.

### **Local Business Resources**

#### **Loudoun County Department of Economic Development (DED)**

The Department of Economic Development helps new and existing businesses identify potential business site locations, provides demographic and market information, and guides businesses through the development review and permitting processes.

Telephone: (703) 777-0426

[www.loudoun.gov/business](http://www.loudoun.gov/business)

#### **Loudoun County Small Business Development Center (SBDC)**

Loudoun County's Small Business Development Center provides one-on-one counseling, business planning assistance, seminars and a network of professional volunteers who can answer business owners' specific technical questions.

Telephone: (703) 430-7222

[www.loudounsbdc.org](http://www.loudounsbdc.org)

#### **Loudoun County Commissioner of the Revenue**

The Office of the Commissioner of the Revenue provides information about business licenses and taxes. Local, state and federal tax forms and applications are also available to new and existing Loudoun County businesses through this office.

Telephone: (703) 777-0260

[www.loudoun.gov/cor](http://www.loudoun.gov/cor)

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**Loudoun County Public Libraries**

The Loudoun County Public Libraries system is a valuable source of information on starting and operating a business. Contact:

Telephone: (703) 777-0368

*[www.lcpl.lib.va.us](http://www.lcpl.lib.va.us)*

**Notes**



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## Step Two: Develop a Business Plan

A business plan is a written document that describes the nature of your business, outlines its financial goals, and demonstrates how you intend to achieve those goals. Your business plan will be a key component for securing financial assistance for your business. Therefore, it must be thorough and comprehensive, and fully explain the most integral components of your business. Most lenders will not talk with you unless you have a detailed business plan. In fact, a business plan will demonstrate to investors that you have explored all pertinent business issues before approaching them for assistance.

A sound business plan typically includes six key components:

- **Executive Summary** – This is a brief overview of what your plan includes. Ideally, it should highlight the most impressive features of your business and point out the important elements of your plan, including your overall business concept, projected growth and revenue, and target markets. Write your executive summary after you have completed your plan.
- **The Company and its Management** – This section includes a detailed description of your business, including its history, mission statement, strategy and vision. It also includes a summary of the related business industry and a discussion that demonstrates your knowledge of your management team's skills and experience. Be sure to include relevant education summaries and significant accomplishments of all of your key personnel.
- **Product/Service Description** – This section describes your products or services in detail. Include a discussion of the advantages your products or services have over those of your competitors. Explain the need and market niche your products or services fill, as well as how you produce your product or provide your service.
- **Market Analysis and Marketing Strategy** – This section identifies your target market. Analyze and assess the market environment and customers, both inside and outside your geographic area. Describe how you will reach these customers and market your products or services to them. Include potential advertising ideas and strategies, as well as descriptions of promotion campaigns you plan to implement.

### Tips

Writing a business plan is a time-intensive but invaluable task. Through the process, you will have to identify every factor and think through every detail of your business. Even part-time businesses need business plans. You'll find a variety of business plan guidebooks at libraries and bookstores. In addition, many software programs include business plan templates and samples.



## Tips

The Loudoun County Small Business Development Center's Entrepreneurial Resource Center makes market data available at no cost to small businesses conducting market analysis research. Call (703) 430-7222 for more information.

The Virginia Center for Innovative Technology's (CIT's) Innovation Avenue is an online guidebook for Virginia's technology entrepreneurs. Innovation Avenue is designed to accelerate technology start-ups. The guidebook offers expert advice, provides answers to frequently asked questions, includes a glossary of need-to-know terms, and provides links to valuable resources. Go to [www.innovationavenue.com](http://www.innovationavenue.com).

- **Financial Analysis** – This section documents information related to expenses, income and prices, all of which you have to have in order to develop an income statement, balance sheet and cash flow analysis. If you need outside financing, specify how much you need, how and when it will be used, and how and when you will repay your investors. If you are not an experienced financial manager or accountant, consider hiring a certified public accountant (CPA) to help you prepare this section.
- **Supporting Documents** – Include sample marketing materials, product samples, and financial data, such as income statements, balance sheets, and cash flow and pro forma schedules.

Consider your business plan to be a work in progress, just as your business is. Review and update it regularly, because your plan will grow as your business grows. Be sure it consistently reflects the current business environment and details your needs and goals.

### A Resource Tailored to Small Businesses

Business owners can receive help with business plan development from the Loudoun County Small Business Development Center (SBDC), a valuable resource for both new and established businesses. SBDC offers free, personalized business counseling, and can help with writing business plans and preparing financial projections. SBDC also sponsors monthly seminars for business owners and prospective owners, and makes a range of professional volunteers available for counseling and to answer questions.

For more information, contact:

**Loudoun County Small Business Development Center**

Telephone: (703) 430-7222

[www.loudounsbdc.org](http://www.loudounsbdc.org)

### Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce

With more than 1,500 members representing about 1,000 area businesses, the Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce serves as a collective “voice of business” on business and public policy issues. The Chamber is committed to ensuring the growth and development of new and existing businesses in and around the county. It offers a variety of programs and services, including regular networking

opportunities, education and business guidance, and publication and communication tools.

Telephone: (703) 777-2176

[www.loudounchamber.org](http://www.loudounchamber.org)

#### **Virginia Center for Innovative Technology (CIT)**

The Virginia Center for Innovative Technology is a state-chartered non-profit corporation that accelerates Virginia's next generation of technology-related and technology companies. CIT provides the only statewide suite of programs and services for technology researchers, entrepreneurs and small businesses. Specifically, CIT offers technology businesses specialized services for technology applications, process and product development, and commercialization. In addition, CIT provides business and market planning, entrepreneurial support, and access to scientific, technical and marketplace documentation and analysis.

Telephone: (703) 689-3000

[www.cit.org](http://www.cit.org)

#### **Virginia Department of Business Assistance (DBA)**

The Virginia Department of Business Assistance provides a variety of resources to assist businesses in the Commonwealth. The Virginia Business Information Center (VBIC) provides individual assistance and answers to specific business questions. The Business Resource Center offers a wealth of information on getting started, incentives, financing and workforce training. The Small Business Research Center makes information available on demographics, industry trends and economic indicators, to help businesses make better decisions.

Telephone: (804) 371-8254

Toll-free: (866) 248-8814

[www.dba.state.va.us](http://www.dba.state.va.us)

#### **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)**

The Small Business Administration's Washington Metropolitan Area District Office has assigned a team of experts to serve Loudoun County businesses exclusively. This team provides assistance in advocacy, finances, management and business development, and procurement.

Telephone: (202) 606-4000

[www.sba.gov/dc](http://www.sba.gov/dc)

**Notes**



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## Step Three: Determine Your Financing Source

The U.S. Small Business Administration estimates that half of all start-up companies close within the first four years. One of the leading reasons for small business failure is inadequate start-up capital. When you developed your business plan, you should have determined how much capital you would need to start up and fund your business, at least for the short term. Unfortunately, many entrepreneurs try to start and operate their businesses without having sufficient capital for the critical first few years.

You have several sources of capital from which to choose. These include:

### Personal Savings, Family and Friends

While personal savings, family members and friends are good funding sources for start-up businesses, these choices require careful consideration. If you are considering using personal savings to finance your business, decide how much of your own money you are willing to invest, knowing you could lose that investment. And if you decide to borrow from family or friends, consider the loan a business transaction and develop a formal agreement that includes payback and interest terms.

### Personal Collateral

If you want to use land or property you own as collateral for financing, consider the possibility that you could literally “lose the farm.” Banks and other financial institutions will want a list of your assets, which they may want you to use as security for a loan.

### Banks and Credit Unions

Commercial lenders at Loudoun’s banks and credit unions can provide financing assistance. When you approach a commercial lender to discuss financing options, be sure to take a copy of your business plan with you. The lender will review your plan and determine whether or not you qualify. Typically, lenders analyze the “Eight Cs” of lending:

- |                      |                               |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Credit            | 5. Collateral                 |
| 2. Character         | 6. Cash flow                  |
| 3. Capital           | 7. Commitment                 |
| 4. Capacity to repay | 8. Conditions of the industry |

## Of Interest

The U.S. Small Business Administration’s “Rule of Thumb” for determining collateral values for securing loans is:

### Real Property

- Commercial real estate 75%
- Residential real estate 80%
- Unimproved land 50%

### Business Assets

- Machinery/Equipment 50%
- Accounts Receivable 20%
- Inventory 20%
- Furniture/Fixtures 10%
- Leasehold Improvements 5%

Some banks will also consider:

- Mutual funds/  
listed securities 65%
- CDs 95%

## Of Interest

CIT has formed strategic relationships with a number of investment organizations, including George Mason University's Century Club Grubstake Breakfast, Mid-Atlantic Venture Association, Early Stage East, VaBIO Association, and the Virginia Technology Capital Access Forum.



### Tips

CIT publishes the Virginia Venture Calendar, a monthly electronic newsletter that provides up-to-date and comprehensive information on event dates and application procedures for venture capital and angel investment gatherings scheduled in Virginia. You can register to receive the newsletter at <http://lists.cit.org/venturecal/signup.htm>.

A list of Loudoun banks that provide commercial lending to established businesses and start-ups is included with this guide.

In addition, the following lender caters specifically to rural enterprises in Loudoun, Fairfax and Arlington counties:

#### Farm Credit of the Virginias

Telephone: (703) 777-3311

Toll-free: (800) 559-1016, Ext. 4

[www.farmcreditofvirginias.com](http://www.farmcreditofvirginias.com)

#### Private Investors ("Angels")

Private investors, also known as "angels," typically are professionals looking for alternative investments that promise high returns. When private investors are considering making an investment in a company, they look at the company's uniqueness and market potential, as well as its management team's experience.

According to the SCORE Counselors to America's Small Business ([www.score.org](http://www.score.org)), tips for finding private investors include:

- **Research** – Identify the most likely candidates by asking your accountant, banker and lawyer for referrals;
- **Keep an open mind** – Potential investors may be found anywhere. According to *Success* magazine, one entrepreneur found an angel investor among the motorcyclists he rides with on weekends;
- **Surf the web** – Good starting places are the National Venture Capital Association ([www.nvca.org](http://www.nvca.org)) and Mid-Atlantic Venture Funds ([www.mavf.com](http://www.mavf.com)), a venture-capital firm in Bethlehem, PA;
- **Make presentations** at venture capital forums or fairs; and
- **Check your library or the web** for such references as *Pratt's Guide to Venture Capital Sources* and *The Directory of Buyout Financing Sources*, both published by Thomson Financial Securities Data ([www.tfibcm.com](http://www.tfibcm.com)).

## Venture Capital Firms

Venture capitalists invest in businesses in exchange for partial equity or ownership. Typically, they are interested in businesses that need \$250,000 to \$1.5 million in funding but have the potential to generate substantial returns. Many resources provide information on venture capital firms and their criteria. A few include:

- **vFinance.com**, the site of vFinance Investments, Inc., a financial services company that provides personalized investment banking and brokerage services to more than 10,000 corporate and private clients worldwide. vFinance Investments, Inc. has offices in more than two dozen U.S. cities, and its website is a leading Internet destination for companies seeking capital and for institutional and high net-worth investors seeking dynamic, high-growth companies;
- **BusinessFinance.com**, an online source of venture capital information and references, including a capital provider database;
- *Inside Secrets to Venture Capital*, by Brian E. Hill and Dee Power, a venture capital text; and
- **The Virginia Center for Innovative Technology** ([www.cit.org](http://www.cit.org)), whose experts will consult with emerging technology companies and help them evaluate their prospects for debt and equity funding. With a “funding roadmap” established, CIT can guide qualified, high potential companies to appropriate early-stage investment organizations.

## Vendor/Supplier Financing

Often times, equipment and machinery companies offer low-cost financing for their products. These vendors range from tractor dealers to photocopy machine suppliers. Determine your equipment needs and then contact the appropriate local dealers for more information.

## Government Agencies (Federal, State and Local)

A variety of government assistance programs help finance businesses. Most of these programs require businesses to meet specific criteria in order to qualify. Summaries of some of the government-sponsored financial programs are included here. Contact each agency for additional information.

## Notes



## Federal Programs

### Small Business Administration Loan Programs

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is a valuable financial resource for small businesses. SBA is organized geographically and has a team available to serve the needs of Loudoun-based businesses. This team conducts local seminars and offers a variety of programs designed to help businesses determine and meet their financial needs.

For more information, contact:

#### U.S. Small Business Administration

Washington Metropolitan Area District Office

Telephone: (202) 606-4000

Toll-Free: (800) 827-5722

[www.sba.gov/dc](http://www.sba.gov/dc)

Following are summaries of the SBA's financing programs.

### SBA 7(a) Loan Guaranty Program

SBA 7(a) program provides partial guaranties on loans of up to \$750,000 made by commercial lenders to start-up and existing small businesses. The amount of guaranty is based on the particular loan program and the amount of financing obtained. Loan proceeds can be used for business or property acquisition, expansion, machinery and equipment purchase, furniture and fixtures, working capital and debt consolidation. Loan maturity is up to 10 years for working capital and generally up to 25 years for fixed assets. SBA offers streamlined applications and approvals for the following programs. Complete information on program requirements and availability is available online.

[www.sba.gov/financing/sbaloan/7a.html](http://www.sba.gov/financing/sbaloan/7a.html)

SBA offers multiple variations of the basic 7(a) loan program to accommodate targeted needs:

#### Low Documentation Loan (SBA Low Doc)

This program reduces the paperwork a lender must complete to obtain an 85 percent guaranty on loan requests of \$150,000 or less for start-up and existing small businesses. Once a small business borrower meets a lender's requirements for credit, the lender can request a guaranty from SBA through SBA Low Doc procedures. It is a quick, two-step process:

1. The borrower completes the front of SBA's application and the lender completes the back; and
2. The lender submits the completed application to SBA and receives an answer within 36 hours.

### **SBA Express**

SBA encourages lenders to make more small loans to start-up and existing small businesses. Participating banks use their own documentation and procedures to approve, service and liquidate loans of up to \$250,000. In return, SBA guaranties up to 50 percent of each loan.

### **SBA Export Express**

SBA pilot program is similar to SBA Express, except it provides loans to existing small businesses for export endeavors. Guaranty levels are 85 percent for loans to \$150,000 and 75 percent for loans between \$150,000 and \$250,000. SBA Export Express is available throughout the country and is expected to be available through September 30, 2005.

### **Small Office/Home Office (SOHO) Loan Program**

SOHO is administered under SBA Community Express Program. This program provides financial and technical assistance to give small and home-based businesses access to business loans of as little as \$5,000.

### **Other Specialized 7(a) Loan Guaranty Programs**

SBA operates a number of other 7(a) loan guaranty programs tailored to specific groups:

#### **CAPLines Loan**

SBA helps small businesses meet their short-term and cyclical working needs with guaranties of up to \$750,000. Five distinct, short-term, working capital CAPLines loans are designed to meet different short-term financing needs: seasonal; contract; builders' line; standard asset-based line; and small asset-based line.

#### **Export Working Capital Loan**

Through this program, SBA can guaranty up to 90 percent of a secured loan or \$750,000, whichever is less, for export-ready small businesses and export management companies. Loans can be for single or multiple export sales and can be used for pre-shipment working capital, post-shipment exposure coverage, or a combination of the two.

## Notes

## Notes



### **SBA 504 Certified Development Company Loans**

The SBA 504 program provides long-term, fixed-rate financing to small and medium-sized businesses for building construction, acquisition and renovation, as well as for major equipment purchases. This program generally assists established, profitable, growing businesses by offering a low down payment and long-term financing at fixed interest rates. SBA 504 loans cannot be used for working capital or refinancing.

*[www.sba.gov/financing/sbaloan/cdc504.html](http://www.sba.gov/financing/sbaloan/cdc504.html)*

The **Virginia Asset Financing Corporation (VAFC)** administers the SBA 504 program in Loudoun County. VAFC staff work closely with business owners to determine eligibility and help them complete loan applications.

For more information, contact:

**Virginia Asset Financing Corporation (VAFC)**

Telephone: (703) 352-0504

Fax: (703) 352-9100

*[www.virginiaasset.org](http://www.virginiaasset.org)*

### **Small Business Investment Companies**

Small Business Investment Companies (SBICs) provide equity capital, long-term loans, debt-equity investments and management assistance to small businesses, particularly during the growing phases. SBICs are privately owned and capitalized companies licensed and regulated by SBA. SBICs each have their own investment criteria. Information about the four SBICs currently operating in Virginia is available from the Virginia Department of Business Assistance at *[www.dba.state.va.us/financing/crd](http://www.dba.state.va.us/financing/crd)*.

### **Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit**

Federal law provides a federal income tax credit equal to 20 percent of the cost to rehabilitate historic buildings for commercial use. To qualify for the credit, a property must be a certified historic structure; that is, it must be listed on the National Register of Historic Places or contribute to a registered historic district. Non-historic buildings built before 1936 qualify for a 10 percent tax credit. Individuals rehabilitating a historic property for their primary residence do not currently qualify for this credit.

Also under this program, the project must be considered a “substantial rehabilitation” and the work must meet the U.S. Secretary of Interior’s *Standards for Rehabilitation*, which are described on the National Park Service’s website:

[www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax/rhb/stand.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax/rhb/stand.htm). Currently, the Internal Revenue Service defines “substantial” as exceeding the owner’s adjusted basis in the building or \$5,000, whichever is greater. The adjusted basis is generally defined as the purchase price, minus the value of the land, minus any depreciation already claimed, plus the value of any earlier capital improvements.

Federal rehabilitation credit applications are available through State Historic Preservation Offices. The National Park Service reviews and issues decisions on all applications.

For more information, contact:

**Virginia Department of Historic Resources**

Winchester Regional Preservation Office

Telephone: (540) 722-3427

[www.dhr.virginia.gov](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov)

### **Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC)**

The Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) is a self-sustaining U.S. government agency whose mission is to foster economic development in new and emerging markets, support U.S. foreign policy, and create U.S. jobs. OPIC helps U.S. businesses invest overseas by managing risk with political risk insurance; providing financing with direct loans and loan guaranties; and working with private capital through OPIC-supported funds. OPIC also works with host country governments to create economic climates that attract U.S. investment, thereby facilitating the entry of hundreds of U.S. businesses into new markets abroad. Because it charges market-based fees for its services, OPIC operates at no net cost to taxpayers. All of OPIC’s guaranty and insurance obligations are backed by the substantial reserves of the organization and by the full faith and credit of the U.S. government.

For general information on OPIC programs, contact:

**Overseas Private Investment Corporation**

Telephone: (202) 336-8700

Toll-free: (800) 225-5722

[www.opic.gov](http://www.opic.gov)

## Virginia Programs

### Virginia Small Business Financing Authority

The Virginia Small Business Financing Authority (VSBFA), staffed by the financial services division of the Virginia Department of Business Assistance (DBA), was created in 1984 with the passage of the *Virginia Small Business Financing Act*. In addition to being a statewide issuer of industrial development bonds, VSBFA is the conduit through which DBA provides financial assistance to Virginia businesses.

For more information, contact:

**Virginia Department of Business Assistance**

Telephone: (804) 371-8254

Toll-free: (866) 248-8814

[www.dba.state.va.us/financing](http://www.dba.state.va.us/financing)

Following are summaries of programs offered through DBA:

### Virginia Capital Access Program

VSBFA's Virginia Capital Access Program (VCAP) provides access to capital for Virginia businesses by encouraging Virginia banks to make loans they would otherwise not make because of a borrower's riskier profile. VCAP establishes a loan loss reserve at each participating bank; the reserve is funded by enrollment premiums paid by the borrower/bank and VSBFA. Because the participating bank determines what loans to enroll without VSBFA's involvement, the program is a flexible, non-bureaucratic tool to help banks meet businesses' financing needs.

### Loan Guaranty Program

The VSBFA will guarantee up to 75 percent of a loan or line of credit extended by a commercial bank to a qualified Virginia business, up to a maximum of \$300,000. With a guaranty from VSBFA, the bank reduces its risk associated with lending to the business, and the business gains access to financing not otherwise available. The program can be used to provide a guaranty for a short-term line of credit or a term loan of up to three years. To qualify, the business must meet the VSBFA criteria for a "small" business: it must have fewer than 250 employees; annual revenues of less than \$10 million in each of the last three years; or a net worth of \$2 million or less.

### **VSBA DIRECT**

VSBA DIRECT is an innovative and flexible program designed to meet the financing needs of businesses in a variety of industries and business sectors. Eligible borrowers include businesses and individuals in the technology, biotechnology, tourism, basic industry, manufacturing and agribusiness sectors; wineries and vineyards; businesses or entities involved in a locality's economic and "quality of life" development; and businesses located in Enterprise Zones and distressed rural and urban communities. This program also finances small businesses that manufacture engines and racecars for the professional motor sports industry. In addition, Industrial Development Authorities and others empowered by the Code of Virginia to make loans for economic development purposes are eligible to apply for assistance.

In order to qualify for VSBA DIRECT, businesses must meet the VSBA's definition of "small" business (see Loan Guaranty Program, above). Funds can be used for a variety of purposes, including owner-occupied real estate acquisitions, leasehold improvements or expansion, machinery and equipment, and short-term and permanent working capital. The minimum loan is \$50,000 and the maximum is \$500,000, with a \$250,000 cap on loans for working capital.

### **Child Day Care Financing Program**

VSBA provides low-interest installment loans to "regulated" childcare providers in Virginia. A "regulated" family home provider may be licensed by the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS); registered through the Voluntary Registration Program; approved through a local Department of Social Services; part of a Licensed Family Day Care System; or participate in the USDA Food Program.

A "regulated" center-based provider may be licensed by the Virginia Department of Social Services or be on record as a "Religious-exempt" provider with the VDSS. Both for-profit and non-profit entities are eligible to apply, as are start-ups. Further, voluntary registration is offered to family home providers that are not required to be licensed. These providers have fewer than six children in care, not including their own children and other children who reside in the home. Information on the Voluntary Registration Program is

## **Notes**



## Notes



available from VDSS online at [www.dss.state.va.us/facility/voluntaryhome.html](http://www.dss.state.va.us/facility/voluntaryhome.html).

Loan proceeds can be used to meet or maintain childcare standards, including health, safety or fire codes, or to make quality enhancements to a childcare program. Loans may also be used for certain start-up costs. However, loans for costs associated with building construction, working capital, refinancing, or debt consolidation are not eligible under this program.

For more information, contact:

**Virginia Department of Social Services**

Telephone: 804-726-7000

[www.dss.state.va.us](http://www.dss.state.va.us)

### **Virginia Economic Development Loan Fund (EDLF)**

The Virginia Economic Development Loan Fund (EDLF) is designed to fill the financing gap between private debt financing and private equity. Through EDLF, the Federal Economic Development Administration and the Commonwealth of Virginia provide funding for fixed-asset financing to new and expanding industries that are creating new jobs or saving “at-risk” jobs in Virginia.

Funds can be used for land and building acquisitions, facility construction or improvements, and machinery and equipment purchases. Manufacturing companies and other industries that derive 50 percent or more of their sales from outside Virginia are eligible to apply. The maximum loan available from EDLF for each project is limited to \$1 million or 40 percent of the total project cost, whichever is less.

### **Small Business Environmental Compliance Assistance Fund**

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality has a cooperative agreement with the Virginia Department of Business Assistance to administer a revolving loan program through which small businesses can get low-interest loans. These loans can be used to purchase and install replacement equipment needed to comply with the *Clean Air Act*; implement voluntary pollution prevention measures; or implement selected voluntary agricultural best management practices (BMPs), as listed in the *Virginia Agricultural BMP*

*Manual.* The maximum loan amount is \$100,000. Repayment terms are based on the borrower's ability to repay, the useful life of the equipment, or the life of the agricultural BMP.

### **VALET Program**

The innovative VALET Program helps Virginia companies as they expand their business with international export trade. The first of its kind in the United States, the VALET Program offers a combination of state capital resources and professional services from private-sector partners to enhance the international efforts of up to 15 companies per year. Participants receive such benefits as \$10,000 in funding toward export-related expenses, \$10,000 worth of professional services from VALET Program partners, and strategic planning guidance and resource coordination.

To determine eligibility or for more information, contact:

#### **Virginia Economic Development Partnership**

Division of International Trade

Telephone: (804) 371-0198

[www.exportvirginia.org](http://www.exportvirginia.org)

### **Community Reinvestment Loans**

The Community Reinvestment Loan program is a private fund that promotes economic development by: assisting with job creation and retention; supporting minority and woman-owned businesses; helping low to moderate-income neighborhood projects or businesses; and supporting such targeted business development areas as brownfield sites, rural enterprises, business district revitalization efforts, labor surplus, military base closures and not-for-profit businesses. Funds can be used for refinancing, mixed-use buildings, rental unit rehabilitation and development by borrowers not occupying the properties. Loan sizes range from \$100,000 to \$2 million. The program will consider start-up businesses, but these businesses need to demonstrate significant management experience in order to qualify.

For more information, contact:

#### **Virginia Asset Financing Corporation**

Telephone: (703) 352-0504

[www.virginiaasset.org](http://www.virginiaasset.org)


**Tips**

In Virginia, women are not considered minorities. In Virginia minorities are defined as belonging to one of five groups: Asian American; Hispanic American; Eskimo and/or Aleut; African American; and Native American.


**Tips**

The Virginia Department of Minority Business Enterprise provides for the certification of those businesses that wish to achieve the benefits of participation in the Commonwealth's minority business programs. Programs include state and local government contracting opportunities, management and technical assistance, educational training, marketing and outreach. Visit [www.dmb.e.state.va.us](http://www.dmb.e.state.va.us) for more information.

### Virginia State Tax Rehabilitation Credits

State Rehabilitation Tax Credit programs provide property owners with significant incentives for private investment in historic building preservation that benefits the public. These credits are available for Certified Historic Structures, which are defined as those that are listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register, certified as eligible for listing, or certified as a contributing structure in a district listed on the Register.

The state tax credits are available for both owner-occupied and income-producing buildings. (Note: If your property is income-producing, you may also be able to take advantage of a federal rehabilitation tax credit; see page 18 for details.) These credits are dollar-for-dollar reductions in income tax liability for taxpayers who rehabilitate historic buildings. Credit amounts are based on total rehabilitation costs, and the state credit is 25 percent of eligible rehabilitation expenses.

To be eligible, the rehabilitation expenses must be at least 25 percent of the assessed value of the buildings for local real estate tax purposes for the year before the rehabilitation work began for owner-occupied structures, and at least 50 percent of the assessed value of the buildings for local real estate tax purposes for the year before the rehabilitation work began for all other eligible structures.

For more information or project assistance, contact:

**Virginia Department of Historic Resources**

Winchester Regional Preservation Office

Telephone: (540) 722-3427

[www.dhr.virginia.gov](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov)

### Providing Access to Capital for Entrepreneurs (PACE) Program

The PACE Program combines the resources of the Virginia Department of Minority Business Enterprise through the Disadvantaged Capital Access Fund with the financial leverage of Virginia lending partners to provide loan guaranties for economically disadvantaged entrepreneurs. The PACE Program is a loan guaranty program, not a grant or endowment; it is for entrepreneurs who own for-profit businesses and are looking for working capital to expand or enhance those businesses.

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For a list of Virginia lenders participating in PACE or for more information, contact:

**Virginia Department of Minority Business Enterprise**

Telephone: (804) 786-6585

Toll-free: (800) 223-0671

*www.dmb.e.state.va.us*

## **Loudoun County Programs**

### **Industrial Development Authority (IDA)**

The Loudoun County Industrial Development Authority is a separate county political subdivision operating under state legislation that gives it the broad power to assist with economic development efforts. The IDA has the ability to issue tax-exempt revenue bonds and has issued almost \$1 billion in such bonds in its more than 20-year existence. In recent years, under federal regulations, these bonds have been earmarked for manufacturing facilities in amounts of up to \$10 million and for non-profit organizations in unlimited amounts. With appropriate funding from outside sources, the IDA also has the power to establish – but not operate – non-residential facilities and can assist with infrastructure construction.

For more information, or an IDA application form contact:

**Loudoun County Industrial Development Authority**

Telephone: (703) 729-8563



The Loudoun County Small Business Center, in addition to providing free business resource information, can work with you to help determine your best financing source. You can reach them at (703)430-7222.

**Notes**



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## Step Four: Choose Your Legal Structure

As you plan your new business, you will have to decide how you want to structure it legally. This decision is critical, since the legal structure affects your company's taxation and liability as well as its management and decision-making structure.

In general, businesses fit into one of five basic types:

- Sole proprietorships
- General partnerships
- Limited partnerships
- Corporations
- Limited liability corporations

### Sole Proprietorship

A sole proprietorship is the simplest business structure and does not require any special legal steps to get started. Bookkeeping and tax preparation for sole proprietorships are simple as well. As a sole proprietor, you and your business are the same for income tax reporting purposes. In addition, you do not pay yourself a salary as such, because your profits (if any) are considered to be your "salary." As a sole proprietor, you are liable financially and legally for everything. Also, you can, but don't have to, register a trade name for your business. If you are a sole proprietor doing business under a trade name, you must register that name with the Loudoun County Clerk of the Circuit Court (see page 39).

### General Partnership

A general partnership is a relationship between two or more persons who team up to operate a business. Partnerships have the advantage of combining the resources or skills of two or more people into one enterprise. One partner, for example, might serve as the source of needed start-up capital, while another brings unique technical expertise to the business.

A written partnership agreement is almost always a practical necessity, as each partner will contribute varying amounts of money, property, labor and skills. The agreement should describe each partner's responsibilities, explain how profits and losses will be



### Tips

The Loudoun County Small Business Development Center (SBDC) offers free business resource information and counseling to help you decide which structure will fit your business best. Be sure to consult with an attorney, accountant or business counselor as well.

The Virginia State Corporation Commission authorizes corporations, partnerships and limited liability corporations to operate in the Commonwealth of Virginia. After you choose your legal structure, refer to Step 6 for information about licensing your business.

## Notes



divided, and detail what will happen if one partner leaves by choice, death or discord. It may be beneficial to use an attorney to develop your partnership agreement.

Partnerships must file a federal income tax return but do not pay tax. Each partner's share of the profits or losses is included in his or her personal income tax return. Partners are personally responsible for all of the partnership's legal and financial liabilities.

### Limited Partnership

Limited partnerships are formed to obtain additional funds for a general partnership. In this structure, the general partners retain control over the partnership management and continue to be liable for all debts. The limited partners, on the other hand, invest money or property in the business and are entitled to share in the profits, while their liability is limited to the extent of their investment.

### Corporation

The advantages and disadvantages of incorporating are numerous and complex. They take into account issues related to business duration; capital formation; income distribution and retention; liability protection; ownership transfer; taxation; and legal costs. Many businesses incorporate to take advantage of the liability protection it affords. Using an attorney to incorporate is not legally mandatory, but most experts recommend doing so.

Corporations have perpetual existence; unlike partnerships or sole proprietorships, corporations cannot be dissolved easily. There are two types of corporations:

- **S-corporations** pass profits or losses directly to the shareholders, much like partnerships; and
- **C-corporations** are legal entities distinct from their owner or owners.

In addition, corporations are classified as “stock” or “non-stock” and “domestic” or “foreign,” and may be classified as “professional.”

- **Stock corporations** are organized for profit and can issue stock shares to raise capital;
- **Non-stock corporations** are organized for purposes other than to make a profit and cannot issue stock shares;
- **Domestic corporations** are both stock and non-stock corporations created under Virginia law;
- **Foreign corporations** are stock and non-stock corporations created under the laws of another state or country; and
- **Professional corporations** consist of groups of people authorized to perform certain professional services within a corporate structure. Virginia law limits these professional services to such occupations as physicians, accountants and attorneys. A complete list of professional services is available online from the *Virginia Business Registration Guide* at [www.state.va.us/sccl/division/clk/forms/brg.pdf](http://www.state.va.us/sccl/division/clk/forms/brg.pdf).

### Limited Liability Corporation

A limited liability corporation is an unincorporated association of one or more members that limits the personal liability of all of the company’s owners. Internal Revenue Service regulations allow a limited liability corporation to choose whether to be taxed as a corporation, a partnership, or, if it has only one member, a sole proprietorship.



### Tips

SCORE Counselors of America has an extensive national network of 10,500 retired and working volunteers that provide free business counseling and advice to all types of businesses, in all stages of development. [www.score.org](http://www.score.org).

**Notes**



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## Step Five: Select a Location and Obtain Appropriate Permits

Regardless of your business type, one of Loudoun County's many business location options will surely fit the bill. From office and industrial parks in the suburban east to open agricultural land in the west – and seven incorporated towns in between – Loudoun County has it all. But whether you plan to operate your business from your home, your farm, or an office or storefront location, you will need to secure the appropriate permits before you can open your doors.

### Zoning

The Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance regulates the numerous types of land uses available in the county. Before all else, you need to determine which zoning classifications match your business use. You can do this in one of three ways:

1. View the Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance online at [www.loudoun.gov/b&d/zoning](http://www.loudoun.gov/b&d/zoning);
2. Visit the Loudoun County Department of Building and Development at the County Government Center in Leesburg (second floor); or
3. Call the Zoning Hotline at (703) 777-0118.

Businesses located in one of Loudoun's seven incorporated towns need to work with both the County and the Town on zoning and permit issues. Contact the towns first.

- **Town of Hamilton** (540) 338-2811
- **Town of Hillsboro** (540) 668-6766
- **Town of Leesburg** (703) 771-2765
- **Town of Lovettsville** (540) 822-5788
- **Town of Middleburg** (540) 687-5152
- **Town of Purcellville** (540) 338-7421
- **Town of Round Hill** (540) 338-7878

Once you have determined the zoning classifications for your business, you can look for available properties. Please note that while the incorporated towns have their own zoning ordinances, the county issues all building permits.

### Tips

In most cases, you will need to provide a business address before you can get your permits. It is likely, however, that you will select your location at the same time you are applying for your permits. Review Steps Five and Six together, and be sure you understand them before signing any leases or other binding agreements.

### Tips

**Permits** give users permission from the county to conduct activities on parcels, including the activities associated with building and renovating structures.

**Zoning** is a combination of a map and related regulations that designates where uses are permitted.

**Certificate of Occupancy** is a document issued by the county which certifies that a building and/or leased locations has met the requirements of the Building Code and has passed relevant trade inspections.

 **Tips**

Loudoun County's Department of Economic Development can help businesses identify available suburban real estate and provide advice about rural property land conditions and availability.

If you already have a location in mind, determine whether your planned business use is allowed within the location's zoning classification before you sign a lease agreement. To find out how specific locations are zoned, you can:

- Use your tax map/parcel number to identify the property on the county's zoning map. The map is available at the Office of Mapping and Geographic Information, or you can access an interactive version of the Loudoun County Mapping System (Web LOGIS) at [www.loudoun.gov/main/online.htm](http://www.loudoun.gov/main/online.htm). You can also access the Land Management Information System at the public counters in the Loudoun County Mapping, Planning, and Building and Development offices.
- Search for the property online using the Loudoun County Real Estate Tax, Assessment and Parcel Database. You can search properties in this database by address, tax map number, tax map number range or parcel identification number. The database is available at [www.loudoun.gov/main/online.htm](http://www.loudoun.gov/main/online.htm).

If the zoning classification corresponds with your business use, you are ready to proceed to the next step. If it does not, you will have to identify other appropriate sites.

### Special Exception (SPEX) Uses

Some uses require a Special Exception (SPEX) or Minor SPEX from the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors before the business can operate within a zoning district. A SPEX use is one that is not permitted by right. The Zoning Ordinance lists, by zoning district, those uses that can be allowed by right or by SPEX. Only uses contained in these lists are considered in each zoning district.

Regardless of whether or not a special exception is required, applicants should verify their findings with the Building and Development staff, who can confirm a site's zoning code, a business' correct zoning classification, and all applicable regulations.

To determine whether your proposed use requires a SPEX application within a district, call Zoning at (703) 777-0397.

The SPEX process begins with a non-binding pre-application meeting, which gives applicants an opportunity to meet informally with staff to clarify the process and discuss issues of concern. If the applicant pursues the SPEX, the county charges a fee for the process based on the proposed use.

For more information on the SPEX process contact:

**Loudoun County Department of Planning**

Telephone: (703) 777-0246

[www.loudoun.gov/planning/spex.htm](http://www.loudoun.gov/planning/spex.htm).

### **Zoning Permits and Certificates of Occupancy (non-residential)**

The Department of Building and Development (B&D) issues both zoning permits and certificates of occupancy. Businesses need a zoning permit for the construction, occupancy or use of principal or accessory structures. Some uses require a SPEX from the Board of Supervisors and site plan approval from B&D before the department will issue a zoning permit.

Businesses must get a Certificate of Occupancy (non-residential) permit for:

- New non-residential buildings;
- Structural changes to an existing building (tenant improvements); and
- Changes in a building's use (e.g., converting a clothing store to a delicatessen).

Before B&D issues an occupancy permit, businesses must secure permits and get appropriate inspections for electrical, plumbing, building, mechanical, gas, fire and health (as applicable). Generally, the Loudoun County Division of Environmental Health inspects all businesses connecting to private water and sewer systems, while the Loudoun County Sanitation Authority inspects businesses connecting to public water and sewer systems. Restaurants, public pools, tourist facilities and other select businesses must also contact the Division of Environmental Health for an inspection.

For more information, contact:



### **Tips**

New tenants must always obtain zoning permits but don't always need a Certificate of Occupancy permit. Check with the Department of Building and Development at (703) 777-0220 to determine whether you need an occupancy permit.


**Tips**

If you conduct your home-based business from a home in an approved, recorded subdivision, you must comply with the restrictive covenants (if any) and, if required, get approval from the developers and/or homeowners association.

**Loudoun County Department of Building and Development**

Telephone: (703) 777-0220

[www.loudoun.gov/b&d](http://www.loudoun.gov/b&d)

**Loudoun County Division of Environmental Health**

Telephone: (703) 777-0234

[www.loudoun.gov/depts/envhlth.htm](http://www.loudoun.gov/depts/envhlth.htm)

**Loudoun County Sanitation Authority**

Telephone: (703) 771-1092

[www.lcsa.org](http://www.lcsa.org)

**Home Occupation Permits**

The Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance allows certain businesses and occupations to be conducted in a dwelling unit, as long as the businesses comply with certain restrictions. Home occupations are permitted within owner- and tenant-occupied single-family, detached duplex, and townhouse residential dwellings. If your home-based business is located in an incorporated town, refer to the contact information on page 31. The following restrictions apply in Loudoun County:

- Members of the family who reside in the home may engage in the occupation;
- One employee, other than family members living in the home, is permitted, as long as one additional off-street parking space is provided. This parking space cannot be located in the front yard unless it is located on an existing driveway;
- The use of the dwelling for the home occupation shall be clearly incidental and subordinate to the use of the dwelling for residential purposes. Not more than 25 percent of the gross floor area of the home – nor 25 percent of the gross floor area of an accessory structure, if that's where the business is conducted – can be used to conduct the home occupation;
- Changes cannot be made to the outside appearance of the building or lot, nor can there be other visible evidence of the home occupation other than one non-illuminated sign, which may not exceed two square feet in area;

- There cannot be retail sales other than of handcrafted items at the home;
- The home business cannot generate traffic volumes higher than would normally be expected in the residential neighborhood. Any need for parking generated by conducting the home occupation shall be met by off-street parking in an area other than the front yard;
- No equipment or process used in the home business can create noise, vibration, glare, fumes, odors or electrical interference detectable to the normal senses off the lot. In the case of electrical interference, no equipment or process that creates visual or audible interference in any off-premises radio or television receivers or that causes fluctuations in off-premises line voltage can be used; and
- Childcare facilities – and home-based childcare businesses in particular – are subject to additional county and state standards. Childcare facilities and homes need to comply with regulations regarding: the numbers and ages of children cared for; the amount of outdoor space available for each child; the size, location and design of play areas; and parking and designated pickup and delivery areas.

Additionally, if you propose to conduct your home-based business from a home in an approved, recorded subdivision, you must comply with the subdivision's restrictive covenants, if any, and, if required, get approval from the developers and/or homeowners association.

The Department of Building and Development issues home occupation permits for county businesses not located in the county's incorporated towns; town offices issue permits for businesses in their jurisdictions. Home occupation permits cost \$50. Businesses can mail applications or visit the Department of Building and Development.

For more information, contact:

**Loudoun County Department of Building and Development**

Telephone: (703) 777-0220

*[www.loudoun.gov/b&d](http://www.loudoun.gov/b&d)*

## Notes





## Tips

The Loudoun County Special Events Committee will help you plan a safe and successful special event.

The committee will work with you to secure the permits, licenses and site safety plans and procedures well before your event takes place. To arrange for a preliminary discussion with the committee about your event, call (703) 737-8919 or visit [www.loudoun.gov/events](http://www.loudoun.gov/events).

### Rural Businesses

The County's Revised General Plan sets forth policies to encourage the rural economy as the principal use in western Loudoun. The Revised Zoning Ordinance implements these policies by regulating uses in Loudoun's rural districts.

Landowners can contact the Department of Economic Development (DED) to discuss ideas for agricultural and rural economy uses. In addition, you can make an appointment with DED's Rural Economy Team for information and to ask questions about a particular use.

Some rural economy uses may require a Rural Economy Site Plan. Check with the Department of Building and Development to determine whether your project requires such a plan. If it does, you will have to hire a licensed surveyor or engineer to prepare it.

Agricultural, horticultural and animal husbandry uses are permitted on lots three acres or larger. Other uses are defined as either directly or not directly related to ongoing agricultural, horticultural or animal husbandry. These uses have performance standards that will determine the proper size of the operation based on the parcel size. Some uses require a Special Exception (SPEX) or Minor Special Exception (Minor SPEX) from the Board of Supervisors, who evaluate the impact of the use on the community. Refer to the SPEX section on page 30 for more information.

### Temporary Use Permits

Loudoun has become a popular venue for a variety of special events. Functions with fewer than 100 people are not considered to be events. However, businesses hosting functions with an expected attendance of more than 100 people must receive a temporary use permit from the Department of Building and Development. Temporary use permits alert public safety providers to the scheduled event, which enables them to plan ahead for traffic and visitor issues.

Businesses may apply for up to 10 temporary use permits per year at a cost of \$50 per permit, and events must be spaced at least 30 days apart. Businesses hosting more than 10 events or more frequent events must apply for a SPEX.

For more information, contact:

**Loudoun County Department of Building and Development**

Telephone: (703) 777-0220

*[www.loudoun.gov/b&d](http://www.loudoun.gov/b&d)*

**Loudoun County Department of Economic Development**

Telephone: (703) 777-0426

*[www.loudoun.gov/business](http://www.loudoun.gov/business)*

**Loudoun County Special Events Coordinator**

Telephone: (703) 737-8919

*[www.loudoun.gov/events](http://www.loudoun.gov/events)*

**Loudoun County Department of Fire and Rescue Services**

Telephone: (703) 777-0333

*[www.loudoun.gov/fire](http://www.loudoun.gov/fire)*

**Notes**



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## Step Six: Apply for Federal, State and Local Business Licenses

Depending on your business type, you will have to obtain various registrations and licenses. We suggest that new business owners visit the Loudoun County Office of the Commissioner of the Revenue to discuss their business with a tax representative who can review all the necessary paperwork. In addition, be sure to check with the appropriate state and federal government agencies to determine which registrations and licenses you will need. Some businesses, including wineries and others selling alcohol, require both state and federal licenses. Others, including financial institutions, utility companies and communications providers, must contact the Virginia State Corporation Commission to comply with additional laws. For more complete information, refer to the *Virginia Business Registration Guide* at [www.state.va.us/sccl/division/clk/forms/brg.pdf](http://www.state.va.us/sccl/division/clk/forms/brg.pdf).

Following is an overview of the steps you need to take to apply for licenses and registrations.

### Register Your Business Structure

A new business incorporating in Virginia must file its articles of incorporation with the Virginia State Corporation Commission (SCC) and pay a filing fee. All corporations, limited liability corporations and limited partnerships must register with the SCC. Exceptions are general partnerships, which register with the Loudoun County Clerk of the Circuit Court, and sole proprietorships, which do not register unless they are using an assumed or fictitious name.

In addition, stock corporations must pay a charter fee based on the number of authorized shares. Finally, if your business is incorporated outside Virginia but you want to do business in the Commonwealth, you must obtain a “Certificate of Authority to Transact Business in Virginia” from the SCC Clerk’s Office.

For more information, contact:

**Virginia State Corporation Commission**

Telephone: (804) 371-9733

Toll-free in Virginia: (866) 722-2551

[www.state.va.us/scc](http://www.state.va.us/scc)



### Tips

The first step to registering your business should be to speak with the Loudoun County Office of the Commissioner of the Revenue to determine which licenses and registrations you need.

Call (703) 777-0260

or visit [www.loudoun.gov/cor](http://www.loudoun.gov/cor).

 **Tips**

Contact the State Corporation Commission to find out if your intended business name is available for use in Virginia:  
[www.state.va.us/scc/division/clk/diracc/htm](http://www.state.va.us/scc/division/clk/diracc/htm).

**Register Your Trade Name**

This procedure registers the business name and the owner's name and address for public record, as required by the Code of Virginia (Section 59.1-69). Virginia Consumer Protection law requires that all fictitious business names for sole proprietors, partnerships and corporations be registered with the appropriate Clerk of the Circuit Court.

For Loudoun County businesses, contact:

**Loudoun County Clerk of the Circuit Court**

Telephone: (703) 777-0270

*[www.loudoun.gov/clerk](http://www.loudoun.gov/clerk)*

**Obtain a Loudoun County Business and Professional Occupational License (BPOL)****Fill Out the Business Tax Declaration Form**

Loudoun County and its towns assess Business and Professional Occupational License (BPOL) taxes on gross receipts generated from business activity. BPOL tax rates vary according to business classification. If your business is located within one of the county's seven incorporated towns, you will need to obtain a business license from that town. If your business is not located within one of the incorporated towns, you will get your business license from the county. If your business generates income at locations other than your primary place of business (e.g., if you do on-site contracting work), you may be required to obtain business licenses from each jurisdiction in which you do business.

Each year, you will receive a renewal form from each jurisdiction that requests information about your business' gross receipts from the preceding year. It is your responsibility to complete and return these renewal forms by the required filing dates.

To obtain a Loudoun County business license, contact:

**Loudoun County Commissioner of the Revenue**

Telephone: (703) 777-0260 (V / TTY)

*[www.loudoun.gov.cor](http://www.loudoun.gov.cor)*

To obtain a business license within one of Loudoun's seven incorporated towns, contact:

**Town of Hamilton**  
(540) 338-2811

**Town of Middleburg**  
(540) 687-5152

**Town of Hillsboro**  
(540) 668-6766

**Town of Purcellville**  
(540) 338-7421

**Town of Leesburg**  
(703) 771-2765

**Town of Round Hill**  
(540) 338-7878

**Town of Lovettsville**  
(540) 822-5788

### **Business Tangible Property Tax**

All businesses located in Loudoun County or in one of the county's seven incorporated towns must register with the Loudoun County Commissioner of the Revenue and pay taxes on tangible personal property, whether they need a county business license or not. Every January, Loudoun businesses receive renewal forms requesting information about the tangible personal property of the organization. If the business is located in one of Loudoun's incorporated towns, the county and town personal property tax assessments will both be based on this information. It is your responsibility to complete and return all forms by the required filing dates.

For information, contact:

**Loudoun County Commissioner of the Revenue**

Telephone: (703) 777-0260 (V / TTY)

*[www.loudoun.gov/cor](http://www.loudoun.gov/cor)*

## Notes





## Tips

One of the questions asked most frequently by entrepreneurs wanting to open a retail business is, “How do I get a reseller’s license?”

In fact, there is no such thing as a reseller’s license in Virginia. Retailers must obtain a business license in the town, city or county where the business will operate. The “reseller’s license” is actually the Virginia Department of Taxation’s Form ST-10, “Sales and Use Tax Certificate of Exemption,” which exempts retailers from paying sales tax on products to be “resold” to the public.

For more information, contact the Virginia Business Information Center at (866) 248-8814 or go to [www.dba.state.va.us/virginia/center](http://www.dba.state.va.us/virginia/center).

### Obtain a Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN) or Tax ID Number

All employers, corporations and partnerships must obtain a federal employer identification number (EIN), which identifies the business’ tax accounts on all federal and state tax forms. Sole proprietors without employees do not need to obtain an EIN; they may use their Social Security number instead.

For more information, contact:

#### Internal Revenue Service

Telephone: (703) 756-6663

Toll-free: (800) 829-4933

[www.irs.gov/businesses/small](http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small)

### Obtain a Virginia State Taxpayer ID Number

Companies doing business in Virginia must register with the Virginia Department of Taxation. This department issues business tax identification numbers, which businesses use to file all applicable taxes. The department will help you determine the taxes for which you are liable. These may include:

- **Retail Sales Tax**, if your business is involved in wholesale or retail sales;
- **Use Tax/Consumer Use Tax**, if tangible personal property is used, consumed or stored in Virginia but purchased outside the Commonwealth;
- **Employer Tax Withholding**, if wages are paid to one or more employees; and
- **Corporate Income Tax**, if your corporation conducts business in Virginia or receives income from Virginia sources.

To obtain your Virginia State Taxpayer ID number and determine the taxes for which you will be liable, contact:

#### Virginia Department of Taxation

Office of Customer Services

Telephone: (804) 367-8037

[www.tax.state.va.us](http://www.tax.state.va.us)

## Contact Other Government Agencies to Register for Other Applicable Licenses and Permits

Some business activities have additional county and state regulations for reasons of public health, safety and welfare. Depending on your business, a number of other Virginia agencies may require you to obtain a license or permit. Three examples are described below:

1. **The Virginia Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation** licenses more than 245,000 individuals and businesses in more than two dozen occupations. Contact the department for a complete list.  
Telephone: (804) 367-8511  
[www.state.va.us/dpor](http://www.state.va.us/dpor)
2. **The Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Board** requires businesses involved in the production, distribution, storage, transportation and/or sale of alcoholic beverages to be licensed.  
Telephone: (804) 213-4400  
[www.abc.state.va.us/licensing.html](http://www.abc.state.va.us/licensing.html)
3. **The Virginia Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services** issues licenses and enforces Virginia food laws that relate to most commercial food processing, storage and retail operations.  
Telephone: (804) 786-2373  
[www.vdacs.state.va.us](http://www.vdacs.state.va.us)

Check with the following agencies to determine whether registrations apply to your business:

### Loudoun County Department of Social Services

Telephone: (703) 777-0353  
[www.loudoun.gov/dss](http://www.loudoun.gov/dss)

### Loudoun County Department of Environmental Health

Telephone: (703) 777-0234  
[www.loudoun.gov/depts/envhlth.htm](http://www.loudoun.gov/depts/envhlth.htm)

### Loudoun County Department of Building and Development

Telephone: (703) 777-0397  
[www.loudoun.gov/b&d](http://www.loudoun.gov/b&d)



## Tips

Agricultural businesses should deal with insurance firms that understand liability for farms that are open to the public. This is especially true for farms included on tours and for horse farms.

The following are subject to additional regulations:

**Business Occupations, Professions and Trades:**

Accountants  
Architects  
Asbestos/Lead Workers  
Auctioneers  
Barbers  
Boxers/Wrestlers  
Branch Pilots  
Career Training Schools  
Cemetery Companies and Sales Personnel  
Contractors/Tradesmen  
Cosmetologists  
Electricians  
Geologists  
Health Professions  
Hearing Aid Specialists  
Heating/Ventilation/Air Conditioning and Gas Fitting Workers  
Home Inspectors  
Interior Designers  
Land Surveyors  
Landscape Architects  
Nail Technicians  
Opticians  
Peddlers and Solicitors  
Plumbers  
Polygraph Examiners  
Professional Engineers  
Real Estate Appraisers  
Real Estate Brokers and Salespeople  
Soil Scientists  
Tourist Establishments  
Water and Sewer Systems  
Waste Management Facility Operators  
Waste and Wastewater Works Operators  
Wax Technicians

**Loudoun County Department of Fire and Rescue Services**

Telephone: (703) 777-0333

*www.loudoun.gov/fire*

**Loudoun County Animal Control**

Telephone: (703) 777-0406

*www.loudoun.gov/animals*

**Loudoun County Sheriff's Office**

Telephone: (703) 777-0407

*www.loudoun.gov/sheriff*

**Virginia Department of Environmental Quality**

Telephone: (804) 698-4000

*www.deq.state.va.us*

**Virginia Department of Labor and Industry**

Telephone: (804) 371-2327

*www.doli.state.va.us*

**Virginia Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services**

Telephone: (804) 371-8200

*www.dacs.state.va.us*

**Virginia Department of Education**

Proprietary Schools

Telephone: (804) 225-2848

*www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Accountability/proprietaryed.html*

**Virginia Department of Health Professions**

Telephone: (804) 662-9900

*www.dhp.state.va.us*

**Virginia Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation**

Telephone: (804) 367-8500

Board of Contractors, Tradesman Program

Telephone: (804) 367-8511

*www.state.va.us/dpor*

## Obtain a Small Business Tax Kit

The U.S. Small Business Administration makes a small business tax kit available online. In addition, the IRS website includes a variety of forms and publications for small businesses.

For more information, contact:

### U.S. Small Business Administration

Telephone: (202) 606-4000

Toll-free: (800) 827-5722

[www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)

### Internal Revenue Service

Telephone: (703) 756-6663

Toll-free: (800) 829-4933

[www.irs.gov/business/small](http://www.irs.gov/business/small)

## Obtain Business Insurance

Without business insurance, you could lose your entire business in a matter of minutes. Of course, deciding what kinds of insurance you need is both important and complex. In making decisions about business insurance, consider the various types of protection available, services and coverage offered by competing insurance providers, and cost, among other factors.

Some forms of insurance are required by law. Workers' compensation (for companies with three or more employees) and vehicle insurance, for example, are mandatory. Other types of insurance are optional. These include:

- **Liability Insurance**, which protects your business from negligence suits;
- **Casualty Insurance**, which protects your business from casualty resulting from fire, theft, robbery, and storm, wind and flood damage. Casualty insurance can cover your business inventory, equipment, structure and contents;
- **Business Interruption Insurance**, which protects against loss of income while the business is temporarily closed because of fire, power loss and other causes;

## Goods and Services Producers:

Animal remedies  
 Beverages and alcohol  
 Commercial animal feed  
 Contract animal feed  
 Cotton  
 Childcare homes and facilities  
 Dairy products  
 Fertilizers  
 Food products  
 Food service and restaurants  
 Hazardous materials  
 Ice cream and similar frozen products  
 Liming materials  
 Meat products for interstate sale  
 Milk and milk products  
 Nursery stock  
 Pesticides  
 Poultry products for interstate sale  
 Storage of apples in controlled atmospheres  
 Water (bottled)

(Every effort was made to include all occupations, goods, & services in these lists; however, you must check with the proper government agencies for specific regulations.)

## Notes



- **Life and Disability Insurance**, which insures an owner or partner against death or long-term disability. Life and disability insurance may help the business survive if a key person becomes unable to perform his or her duties. Insurance proceeds can enable the remaining partners to buy the disabled or deceased partner's share of the business; and
- **Group Health Plans**, which are generally more affordable than individual insurance and therefore make an attractive fringe benefit when recruiting employees. The federal government may legislate significant changes in the way health insurance is paid for and administered. Consult an insurance professional for the most current rules and for guidance on the best approach for your business.

## Step Seven: Hire Employees

Making the decision to hire employees will be one of the most crucial decisions you will make as your business grows.

On the positive side, employees free up some of your time. You will be able to delegate tasks, expand your business hours, and offer more skills and expertise to your customers. On the other hand, employees raise your overhead costs, add to your administrative paperwork and recordkeeping tasks, and require supervision.

### Employer Identification Number (EIN)

If you haven't already done so, you need to obtain a federal employer identification number (EIN). The EIN identifies your business's tax accounts on all federal and state tax forms (see page 40).

For more information, contact:

#### Internal Revenue Service

Telephone: (703) 756-6663

Toll-free: (800) 829-4933

[www.irs.gov/businesses](http://www.irs.gov/businesses)

### Employees and Independent Contractors

Businesses sometimes prefer to hire people as independent contractors because the nature or duration of the work does not justify hiring them as employees. If a business hires and pays an independent contractor \$600 or more during the year, it must report this information to the IRS using IRS Form 1099. Businesses are not required to withhold or pay employer taxes for monies they pay to independent contractors.

The distinction between an employee and an independent contractor depends on the working relationship between the employer and the person performing services. Generally, independent contractors are persons who offer their services to the general public. The general rule is that a person is an independent contractor if the employer has the right to control or direct the result of the work but not the methods or means of accomplishing that work. Independent contractors generally supply their own tools, work at times and places of their choosing, and cannot be discharged by the employer. A written contract for work helps define these arrangements. In contrast, in an employer-employee relationship, the



### Tips

The Northern Virginia Workforce Investment Board runs seven SkillSource employment service centers in the Northern Virginia region. SkillSource centers offer a variety of services to businesses who are looking for employees. These services include: access to a resume bank; the ability to post specific job openings; access to labor market information; access to business service centers; and the placement of staffing services. For more information call (703)777-0150.



## Tips

When the time comes to hire employees, know that you will have to comply with a number of legal requirements. Learn about the state and federal forms and tax filing procedures that apply, and be prepared to keep highly accurate records.

employer supplies the tools and a place to work, has the right to fire the employee, and controls the means of work.

Check with your accountant or tax professional, if you don't know whether to consider a person you are hiring to be an independent contractor or an employee. If the IRS concludes that an employer has no reasonable basis for treating a worker as an independent contractor, the employer may be liable for back payroll taxes for that worker.

For more information, contact:

**Virginia Department of Taxation**

Telephone: (804) 367-8037

[www.tax.state.va.us](http://www.tax.state.va.us)

## Employer Tax Withholding

As an employer, the law requires you to withhold federal and state income taxes, as well as Medicare and Social Security (FICA) taxes, from each of your employees' earnings. In addition, businesses must make payments to Social Security from their own funds for all employees.

The amount of income and Social Security taxes you withhold and pay for each employee varies according to the rate of pay, marital status, and number of exemptions claimed by the employee on IRS Form W-4. When you are preparing employer tax returns, be sure you have the most recent withholding tax tables, since these tables change as the tax laws change.

Businesses file federal withholding, Medicare and Social Security taxes four times a year, using IRS Form 941. Small businesses make tax payments monthly, while large businesses make payments semi-weekly. All businesses can make these payments either electronically using the Electronic Federal Tax Payment System (EFTPS), or by depositing them into an authorized financial institution using Federal Tax Deposit Coupon 8109. For tax payment purposes, a business is considered to be a small business if it reported \$50,000 or less in payroll taxes the prior year.

Businesses must also report income tax withholding to the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Virginia Department of Taxation assigns a filing status based on either registration information or the

actual business payment record and issues forms accordingly. Quarterly, monthly and seasonal filers use form VA-5; semi-weekly filers use Forms VA-15 and VA-16.

For more information, visit the Virginia Department of Taxation website at [www.tax.state.va.us](http://www.tax.state.va.us).

Your employees must complete and return a federal Form W-4 when they begin employment and when they want to change the number of exemptions (i.e., withholding allowances) they claim. Because the W-4 indicates the number of exemptions an employee is claiming, you will be able to determine their proper withholding tax.

### **Sole Proprietors and Partners**

If you are a sole proprietor or a partner in a general or limited partnership, you are not considered an employee and are not subject to withholding. In lieu of withholding, you may be required to make quarterly estimated tax payment if your withholding from other income sources, such as salary from another job, is not enough.

To figure and pay estimated taxes to the IRS, use Form 1040-ES. For Virginia, use Form 760-ES. You are responsible for making these payments on time and ensuring that the payments accurately reflect the taxes you expect to owe. For example, if you expect to owe \$500 after subtracting withholding and other tax credits, you may have to make estimated tax payments if your withholding tax payments for the year either equal last year's tax liability or equal 90 percent of your current tax liability. The tax laws on this are complex and change frequently, so check with an accountant or tax expert for the most current information.

### **Corporation Owners**

If your business is incorporated, as the owner you are automatically an employee and are therefore subject to withholding on any salary the corporation pays you. Therefore, you do not have to file estimated tax returns as an individual, but your corporation may have to make estimated tax payments on corporate income. To do this, use Form 1120-W.

## **Notes**



 **Tips**

For answers to questions about workers' compensation classifications and rates, contact the National Council on Compensation Insurance at (800) 622-4123 or go to [www.ncci.com](http://www.ncci.com).

## Unemployment Tax

Virginia and the federal government both require employers to pay an unemployment tax based on an employee's salary. Businesses with at least one employee must pay unemployment tax.

The Federal Unemployment Tax (FUTA) is filed annually on federal Form 940. The FUTA tax must be paid either annually by January 31 of the following year, or quarterly using Coupon 8109, if a higher payroll requires it.

Virginia unemployment taxes are levied on wages of employees who work in Virginia. These taxes go into a state fund, from which benefits are paid to claimants. Unemployment insurance offers workers protection from loss of earnings when they are partially or completely laid off from their jobs through no fault of their own. Businesses file and pay this tax quarterly using Virginia Form VEC-FC-20 or by registering online. Both Form VEC-FC-20 and online registration are available from the Employer Resources tab on the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) website, [www.vec.state.va.us](http://www.vec.state.va.us).

Virginia's unemployment tax rate varies depending on the business' experience rating – that is, the number of unemployment claims made against the business. As a new business, you can obtain your tax forms and tax rate by filing form VEC-FC-27, which is also available on the VEC website.

For information and forms, contact:

**Virginia Employment Commission**

Telephone: (703) 803-0000; (804) 786-1485

[www.vec.state.va.us](http://www.vec.state.va.us)

## Workers' Compensation Insurance

Any employer who has three or more regular employees must furnish workers' compensation insurance at no cost to the employee. Employers may purchase this insurance through a private insurance company or can apply to the Virginia State Corporation Commission to obtain a certificate of self-insurance. Related costs vary by industry and occupation. Workers' compensation insurance provides compensation on medical benefits to workers or their dependents when the workers become disabled or die from accidental injury or occupational disease due to their employment.

For more information, contact:

**Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission**

Telephone: (703) 934-0521

[www.vwc.state.va.us](http://www.vwc.state.va.us)

## Immigration and Naturalization

Under the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, all new employees must verify their eligibility to work. New employees must be American citizens or aliens who are authorized to work in this country.

As an employer, you must verify the employment eligibility of anyone you hired after November 6, 1986 and complete and retain either a one-page "Employment Eligibility Verification" (Form I-9) or, for foreign workers, an Alien Labor Certification from the Virginia Employment Commission.

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service publishes a "Handbook for Employers" (M-274), which explains the law and instructs employers on how to comply. This handbook is available online at [www.uscis.gov/graphics/lawsregs/handbook/hnmanual.htm](http://www.uscis.gov/graphics/lawsregs/handbook/hnmanual.htm).

For more information, contact:

**U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services**

Toll-free: (800) 375-5283

[www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov)

## Americans with Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) prohibits discrimination in employment against individuals with disabilities and mandates their full participation in both publicly and privately provided services and activities.

The ADA requires that "public accommodations" such as restaurants, retail stores, hotels, theaters, doctors' offices, pharmacies, private schools and daycare centers may not discriminate against persons with disabilities. Reasonable efforts must be made to remove existing barriers, and new construction must be made accessible. The law is complex and wide-ranging.

For more information, contact:

**Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)**

Toll-free: (800) 669-4000

[www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov)



## Tips

Employers operating in Virginia are required by law to display certain state and federal posters at their workplace(s). Posters include Occupational Safety and Health, Unemployment Insurance, Workers' Compensation Insurance, Davis-Bacon Act and the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act.

See Quick Reference section for contact info: Virginia Department of Labor and Industry, Virginia Employment Commission, Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission, and the US Department of Labor, ESA.

## Notes



### Virginia Right-to-Work Law

Virginia has a “Right-to-Work” law that prohibits a “union shop” or “closed shop.” In other words, Virginia employers cannot deny a person the right to work based on membership or non-membership in a labor union or organization. Employers cannot require employees to become or remain union members and cannot require employees to pay dues to a union as a condition of employment. The law also regulates other aspects of employee-management relations.

For more information, contact:

**Virginia Department of Labor and Industry**

Division of State Labor Law

Telephone: (703) 392-0900, (804) 371-2327

*[www.doli.state.va.us](http://www.doli.state.va.us)*

### Minimum Wage

Federal and Virginia laws currently require employers to pay employees a minimum wage of \$5.15 per hour. Under specific circumstances, various minimum wage exceptions apply to workers with disabilities, full-time students, people under age 20 in their first 90 consecutive calendar days of employment, tipped employees and student-learners.

For more information, contact:

**Virginia Department of Labor and Employment Law**

Division of State Labor Law

Telephone: (703) 392-0900, (804) 786-2386

*[www.doli.state.va.us](http://www.doli.state.va.us)*

### Other State Labor Regulations

In addition to enforcing the Virginia Right-to-Work law and minimum wage issues, the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry also enforces regulations related to:

- Equal pay
- Child labor
- Apprenticeship training
- Employee notification of employment laws and regulations with federal and state posters

*([www.doli.gov/osbp/sbrefa/poster/main.htm](http://www.doli.gov/osbp/sbrefa/poster/main.htm)).*

## Loudoun County Contacts

### Business Assistance:

#### Loudoun County Department of Economic Development

1 Harrison Street, SE  
Fifth Floor  
P.O. Box 7000  
Leesburg, VA 20177-7000  
**Telephone: (703) 777-0426**  
*[www.loudoun.gov/business](http://www.loudoun.gov/business)*

#### Loudoun County Industrial Development Authority

P.O. Box Seven  
Leesburg, VA 20178  
**Telephone: (703) 729-8563**

#### Loudoun County Small Business Development Center

21145 Whitfield Place  
Suite 104  
Sterling, VA 20165  
**Telephone: (703) 430-7222**  
*[www.loudounsbdc.org](http://www.loudounsbdc.org)*

#### Loudoun County Entrepreneurial Resource Center

21145 Whitfield Place  
Suite 104  
Sterling, VA 20165  
**Telephone: (703) 430-7222**  
*[www.loudounsbdc.org/location](http://www.loudounsbdc.org/location)*

#### Loudoun Workforce Resource Center

102 Heritage Way, NE  
Leesburg, VA 20175  
**Telephone: (703) 777-0150**  
*[www.loudoun.gov/services/career.htm](http://www.loudoun.gov/services/career.htm)*

#### Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce

101 Blueseal Drive  
Suite 100  
P.O. Box 1298  
Leesburg, VA 20177-1298  
**Telephone: (703) 777-2176**  
**Toll-free: (800) 578-LCCC (5222)**  
*[www.loudounchamber.org](http://www.loudounchamber.org)*

#### Loudoun Convention & Visitors Association

222 Catocin Circle  
Suite 100  
Leesburg, VA 20175  
**Telephone: (703) 771-2170**  
*[www.visitloudoun.org](http://www.visitloudoun.org)*


**Tips**

Businesses connecting to public water and sewer systems must be inspected by the Loudoun County Sanitation Authority.

**Business Requirements:**
**Contacts for:**

- Agriculture Exemption
- Business, Professional and Occupational License
- Business Taxes
- Business Tangible Personal Property Tax
- Consumer Utility Tax
- Mixed Beverage License
- Retail Sales Tax
- Short-Term Rental Tax
- Transient Occupancy Tax

**Loudoun County Commissioner of the Revenue**

Business License Tax Division

1 Harrison Street, SE

First Floor

P.O. Box 7000

Leesburg, VA 20177

**Telephone: (703) 777-0260**

*[www.loudoun.gov/cor](http://www.loudoun.gov/cor)*

**Satellite Location:**

21641 Ridgetop Circle

Suite 100

Sterling, VA 20166

**Contacts for:**

- Trade Name Registration
- Bondsman

**Loudoun County Clerk of the Circuit Court**

18 E. Market Street

Leesburg, VA 20176

**Telephone: (703) 777-0270**

*[www.loudoun.gov/clerk](http://www.loudoun.gov/clerk)*

**Permits for:**

- Food Service
- Tourist Establishment
- Water and Sewer Systems

**Loudoun County Division of Environmental Health**

1 Harrison Street, SE

Second Floor

P.O. Box 7000

Leesburg, VA 20177-7000

**Telephone: (703) 777-0234**

*[www.loudoun.gov/depts/envhlth.htm](http://www.loudoun.gov/depts/envhlth.htm)*

**Loudoun County Sanitation Authority**

880 Harrison Street, SE  
P.O. Box 4000  
Leesburg, VA 20175-1403  
**Telephone: (703) 771-1092**  
*[www.lcsa.org](http://www.lcsa.org)*

**Permits for:**

- Fire and Rescue Service
- Lock-Box Program

**Loudoun County Department of Fire and Rescue Services**

Fire Marshal's Division  
16600 Courage Court  
Leesburg, VA 20175  
**Telephone: (703) 777-0333**  
*[www.loudoun.gov/fire](http://www.loudoun.gov/fire)*

**Permits for:**

- Building
- Home Occupation
- Land Disturbance
- Non-residential Occupancy
- Temporary Use Permits
- Zoning

**Loudoun County Department of Building and Development**

1 Harrison Street, SE  
Second Floor  
P.O. Box 7000  
Leesburg, VA 20177-7000  
**Telephone: (703) 777-0220 and (703) 777-0397**  
**ZoningHotline: (703) 777-0118**  
*[www.loudoun.gov/b&d](http://www.loudoun.gov/b&d)*

**Permits for:**

- Special Exception (SPEX) Uses

**Loudoun County Department of Planning**

1 Harrison Street, SE  
Third Floor  
Leesburg, VA 20177-7000  
**Telephone: (703) 777-0246, and 777-0397**  
*[www.loudoun.gov/planning/spex.htm](http://www.loudoun.gov/planning/spex.htm)*

**Permits for:**

- Childcare

**Loudoun County Department of Social Services**  
 102 Heritage Way, NE  
 Second Floor  
 Leesburg, VA 20176  
**Telephone: (703) 777-0353**  
*www.loudoun.gov/dss*

**Permits for:**

- Kennels

**Loudoun County Animal Control**  
 39820 Charles Town Pike  
 Waterford, VA 20197  
**Telephone: (703) 777-0406, (540) 882-3211**  
*www.loudoun.gov/animals*

**Other Services:**

- Business Information Form
- Peddler and Solicitor Permit

**Loudoun County Sheriff's Office**  
 21641 Ridgetop Circle  
 Sterling, VA 20166  
**Telephone: (703) 777-0407**  
**Non-Emergency: (703) 777-1021**  
*www.loudoun.gov/sheriff*

**Property Services:**

- Real Property Assessments
- Land Use Taxation Program

**Loudoun County Department of Management and Financial Services**  
 Real Property Valuations  
 Office of the Assessor  
 1 Harrison Street, SE  
 Fourth Floor  
 P.O. Box 7000  
 Leesburg, VA 20177-7000  
**Telephone: (703) 777-0290**  
*www.loudoun.gov/finsev*

**Vehicle Decals:**

**Loudoun County Treasurer's Office**  
 1 Harrison Street, SE  
 First Floor  
 P.O. Box 347  
 Leesburg, VA 20178-03476  
**Telephone: (703) 777-0280**  
*www.loudoun.gov/treas*

**Satellite Location:**

21400 Ridgetop Circle  
First Floor  
Sterling, VA 20166-6507

**Loudoun County Public Libraries:**

Administration	(703) 777-0368
Ashburn	(703) 737-8100
Eastern Loudoun	(703) 444-3228
Lovettsville	(540) 822-5824
Middleburg	(540) 687-5730
Purcellville	(540) 338-7235
Rust	(703) 777-0323
Sterling	(703) 430-9500

*www.lcpl.lib.va.us*

**Town Government Contacts****Town of Hamilton**

53 E. Colonial Highway  
P.O. Box 130  
Hamilton, VA 20159  
**Telephone: (540) 338-2811**

**Town of Hillsboro**

P.O. Box 32008  
Hillsboro, VA 20134-1508  
**Telephone: (540) 668-6766**

**Town of Leesburg**

25 W. Market Street  
P.O. Box 88  
Leesburg, VA 20178  
**Telephone: (703) 777-2765**  
*www.leesburgva.org*

**Town of Lovettsville**

6 E. Pennsylvania Avenue  
P.O. Box 209  
Lovettsville, VA 20180  
**Telephone: (540) 822-5788**

**Town of Middleburg**

10 W. Marshall Street  
P.O. Box 187  
Middleburg, VA 20118  
**Telephone: (540) 687-5152**  
*www.middleburg.org*

**Town of Purcellville**  
130 E. Main Street  
Purcellville, VA 20132  
**Telephone: (540) 338-7421**  
*www.purcellvilleva.com*

**Town of Round Hill**  
23 Main Street (Rt. 719)  
P.O. Box 36  
Round Hill, VA 20142  
**Telephone: (540) 338-7878**  
*www.roundhillva.org*

## **Commonwealth of Virginia Contacts**

### **Business Assistance:**

**Virginia Asset Financing Corporation**  
4165 Chain Bridge Road  
Fairfax, VA 22030  
**Telephone: (703) 352-0504**  
*www.virginiaasset.org*

**Virginia Business Information Center**  
P.O. Box 446  
Richmond, VA 23218-0446  
**Telephone: (804) 371-0438**  
**Toll-free: (866) 248-8814**  
*www.dba.state.va.us/virginia*

**Virginia Center for Innovative Technology**  
2214 Rock Hill Road, Suite 600  
Herndon, VA 20170-4200  
**Telephone: (804) 689-3000**  
*www.cit.org*

**Virginia Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services**  
1100 Bank Street  
Richmond, VA 23219  
**Telephone: (804) 786-2373**  
*www.vdacs.state.va.us*

**Virginia Department of Business Assistance**  
P.O. Box 446  
Richmond, VA 23218-0446  
**Telephone: (804) 371-8254**  
**Toll-free: (866) 248-8814**  
*www.dba.state.va.us*

**Virginia Department of Historic Resources**

Winchester Regional Preservation Office  
107 N. Kent Street  
Suite 203  
Winchester, VA 22601  
**Telephone: (540) 722-3427**  
*[www.dhr.virginia.gov](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov)*

**Virginia Department of Minority Business Enterprise**

200-202 N. 9th Street  
11th Floor  
Richmond, VA 23219  
**Telephone: (804) 786-6585**  
**Toll-free: (800) 223-0671**  
*[www.dmb.e.state.va.us](http://www.dmb.e.state.va.us)*

**Virginia Economic Development Partnership**

P.O. Box 798  
901 E. Byrd Street  
Richmond, VA 23218-0798  
**Telephone: (804) 371-8100**  
*[www.yesvirginia.org](http://www.yesvirginia.org)*

**Virginia Small Business Development Center**

4031 University Drive  
Suite 200  
Fairfax, VA 22030  
**Telephone: (703) 277-7700**  
*[www.virginiastbdc.org](http://www.virginiastbdc.org)*

**Business Requirements:****Contacts for:**

- Corporate Income Tax
- Income Tax Withholding
- Individual Income Tax
- Retail Sales Tax
- State Taxpayer ID Number
- Virginia Tax Facts

**Virginia Department of Taxation**

P.O. Box 1115  
Richmond, VA 23218-1115  
**Telephone: (804) 367-8037**  
*[www.tax.state.va.us](http://www.tax.state.va.us)*

**Contacts for:**

- Corporate Registration
- Limited Liability Corporation Registration
- Partnership Registration

Virginia State Corporation Commission  
Office of the Clerk  
P.O. Box 1197  
Richmond, VA 23218  
Telephone: (804) 371-9911  
Toll-free: (800) 552-7945  
[www.state.va.us/scc](http://www.state.va.us/scc)

**Employment and Payroll:****Equal Employment Opportunity:**

Virginia Employment Commission  
703 E. Main Street  
Richmond, VA 23219  
Telephone: (703) 803-0000, (804) 786-1485  
[www.vec.state.va.us](http://www.vec.state.va.us)

**Minimum Wage and Payroll Requirements:**

Virginia Department of Labor and Industry  
Division of State Labor Law  
Powers-Taylor Building  
13 South 13th Street  
Richmond, VA 23219  
Telephone: (804) 371-2327  
[www.doli.state.va.us](http://www.doli.state.va.us)

**State Posters**

Virginia Department of Labor and Industry  
Office of VOSH Research & Analysis  
13 South 13th Street  
Richmond, VA 23219  
Telephone: (804) 786-1995  
[www.doli.state.va.us](http://www.doli.state.va.us)

**Workers' Compensation and Unemployment Compensation:**

Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission  
1000 DMV Drive  
Richmond, VA 23220  
Telephone: (804) 367-8600  
[www.vwc.state.va.us](http://www.vwc.state.va.us)

Virginia Employment Commission  
703 E. Main Street  
Richmond, VA 23219  
Telephone: (804) 786-1485, (703) 803-0000  
[www.vec.state.va.us](http://www.vec.state.va.us)

**Other Licenses, Registrations and Regulations:****Alcohol Production, Distribution, Storage and Sales:**

Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Board  
2901 Hermitage Road  
Richmond, VA 23220  
Telephone: (804) 213-4400  
[www.abc.state.va.us](http://www.abc.state.va.us)

**Childcare:**

Virginia Department of Social Services  
7 N. Eighth Street  
Richmond, VA 23219  
Telephone: (804) 726-7000  
[www.dss.state.va.us](http://www.dss.state.va.us)

**Environmental Regulations:**

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality  
Division of Technical Evaluation  
629 East Main Street  
P.O. Box 10009  
Richmond, VA 23240  
Telephone: (804) 698-4000  
[www.deq.state.va.us](http://www.deq.state.va.us)

Virginia Department of Waste Management  
629 E. Main Street  
P.O. Box 10009  
Richmond, VA 23240  
Telephone: (804) 698-4000  
[www.deq.state.va.us/waste](http://www.deq.state.va.us/waste)

Virginia State Water Control Board  
Office of Water Resources Management  
629 E. Main Street  
P.O. Box 10009  
Richmond, VA 23240  
Telephone: (804) 698-4000  
[www.deq.state.va.us/water](http://www.deq.state.va.us/water)

**Franchise Registration:**

Virginia State Corporation Commission  
Division of Securities & Retail Franchising  
P.O. Box 1197  
Richmond, VA 23218  
Telephone: (804) 371-9911  
Toll-free: (800) 552-7945  
[www.state.va.us/sc](http://www.state.va.us/sc)

**Occupational Licenses:**

Virginia Department of Education  
Proprietary Schools  
P.O. Box 2120  
Richmond, VA 23218  
Telephone: (804) 225-2848  
[www.pen.k12.va.us](http://www.pen.k12.va.us)

Virginia Department of Health Professionals  
6603 W. Broad Street, 5th Floor  
Richmond, VA 23230  
Telephone: (804) 662-9900  
[www.dhp.state.va.us](http://www.dhp.state.va.us)

Virginia Department of Professional & Occupational Regulation  
Board of Contractors, Tradesman Program  
3600 W. Broad Street  
Richmond, VA 23230  
Telephone: (804) 367-8511  
[www.state.va.us/dpor](http://www.state.va.us/dpor)

**Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA) Regulations:**

Virginia Department of Labor and Industry  
Division of Occupational Safety and Health  
Powers-Taylor Building  
13 South 13th Street  
Richmond, VA 23219  
Telephone: (804) 371-2327  
[www.doli.state.va.us](http://www.doli.state.va.us)

**Trademark Registration:**

Virginia State Corporation Commission  
Division of Securities & Retail Franchising  
P.O. Box 1197  
Richmond, VA 23218  
Telephone: (804) 371-9911  
Toll-free: (800) 552-7945  
[www.state.va.us/scc](http://www.state.va.us/scc)

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313  
Telephone: (800) 786-9199  
[www.uspto.gov](http://www.uspto.gov)

**Vehicle Licenses and Inspections:**

Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, Leesburg  
945 Edwards Ferry Road  
Leesburg, VA 20176  
Telephone: (800) 435-5137  
[www.dmv.state.va.us](http://www.dmv.state.va.us)

Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, Sterling  
100 Free Court  
Sterling, VA 20164  
Telephone: (800) 435-5137  
[www.dmv.state.va.us](http://www.dmv.state.va.us)

**Federal Contacts****Business Assistance:**

**U.S. Small Business Administration**  
Washington District Office  
1110 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Ninth Floor  
Washington, DC 20005  
Telephone: (202) 606-4000  
Toll-free: (800) 827-5722  
[www.sba.gov/dc](http://www.sba.gov/dc)

**Overseas Private Investment Corporation**  
1110 New York Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20527  
Telephone: (202) 336-8700  
Toll-free: (800) 225-5722  
[www.opic.gov](http://www.opic.gov)

**Business Requirements:****Contacts for:**

- Employee Tax Withholding
- Employer ID Number
- Federal Unemployment
- Individual, Partnership and Corporate Taxes

**Internal Revenue Service**  
5205 Leesburg Pike  
Bailey's Crossroads, VA 22041  
Telephone: (703) 756-6663  
Toll-free: (800) 829-4933  
[www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)

**Citizenship and Immigration:**

**U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services**  
Office of Business Liaison  
20 Massachusetts Avenue, NW  
Room 2000  
Washington, DC 20536  
Telephone: (800) 375-5283  
[www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov)

**Other Permits:****Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Production and Sales:**

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms  
650 Massachusetts Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20226  
Telephone: (202) 927-8810  
[www.atf.gov](http://www.atf.gov)

**Broadcasting:**

Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington DC 20554  
Telephone: (888) 225-5322  
[www.fcc.gov](http://www.fcc.gov)

**Food, Drugs and Cosmetics Production:**

Food and Drug Administration  
Small Business Division  
5600 Fishers Lane  
Room 12B31  
Rockville, MD 20852  
Telephone: (301) 827-4573  
[www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)

**Securities Sales:**

Securities and Exchange Commission  
450 5th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20549  
Telephone: (202) 942-7040  
[www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov)

**Other Resources:****Federal Posters**

United States Department of Labor, ESA  
Wage and Hour Division  
Federal Building, Room 416  
400 North Eighth Street  
Richmond, VA 23240  
Telephone: (804) 771-2995  
[www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov)

**Minimum Wage-Fair Labor Standards Act  
and the  
Walsh-Healy Public Contracts Act**

United States Department of Labor  
Frances Perkins Building  
200 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Washington DC 20210  
Telephone: (866) 4-USA-DOL  
[www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov)